

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

	X
AULISTAR MARK, HANCHEN LU and	:
ANDREW HUDSON, Individually and on Behalf of	:
All Others Similarly Situated,	:
	:
Plaintiffs,	:
-against-	Civil Action No. 1:13-cv-04347-AJN
	:
GAWKER MEDIA LLC, and NICK DENTON,	:
	:
Defendants.	:
	X

AFFIDAVIT OF MEREDITH WOERNER

MEREDITH WOERNER declares, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, that the following is true and correct:

1. I am of legal age and am competent to make this Declaration. I have personal knowledge of the facts sets forth in this Declaration, or I have learned said facts to speak on behalf of Gawker Media, LLC.
2. I currently am a Senior Reporter for Gawker Media, LLC's ("Gawker's") website io9.com, a daily publication that covers science, science fiction, and the future. I worked for Gawker since April 2008 as an io9, where I started as a reporter. I cover movies, TV shows, and celebrity interviews for io9. I supervised Andrew Hudson when he was an intern.
3. I supervised only one intern at a time, but other editors at io9 supervised interns as well. There were at most four individuals interning for io9 at any given time.
4. Annalee Newitz (Editor-In-Chief of io9) and Charlie Jane Anders (an io9 editor) were involved in recruiting the interns for io9. To recruit new interns we would post an internship opening on the io9 website asking for applications. Since having an

internship at io9 was very desirable, we usually would receive a large number of applicants in response to this post. From that pool of applicants, Charlie Jane and Annalee would then email back the candidates that seemed most compatible, asking them to write up a few pitch ideas. If the applicant's pitch ideas and writing were good, we would email them to invite them to intern, listing the schedule we hoped would work for them.

5. The interns monitored tip emails from the public and researched relevant contacts at various media entities that we wanted to cover our stories. For example, we would occasionally ask other media entities if they were interested in covering an exclusive or particularly interesting io9 story with a credit and link back to Gawker, and interns would research who at the other entity should receive the request. Another main reason we had interns collect this contact information was so we could send out public relations blasts, which are repackaged versions of longer-form press releases. The task was not difficult, but took time and taught interns important skills such as how to work in the fast-paced publishing environment and how to work with other publications. Perhaps most importantly, it helped the interns to build a list of contacts, which is exceptionally critical in this industry. I have worked on my contact list for years, and it is an invaluable resource that I use in order to find stories, sources, and other resources in my job.

6. The interns also spent much of their time learning to research larger feature stories that editors were working on. Additionally, they learned how to find potential stories and pitch them to editors, and they also had the opportunity to pitch their own feature stories. These were important skills to learn, as they are crucial for working on any editorial website.

7. We never personally promised an intern or internship applicant a job at the end of the internship, although we sometimes hired former interns to work for io9 as full-time employees after their internships. For example, Cyriaque Lamar and Alistar Wilkins, former io9 interns, were both hired as full-time io9 employees post-internship. If the need for a new staff member was there, and we had an exceptional intern who would make a good fit for that position, we would hire them.

8. We did not offer monetary compensation for the internships at io9.

9. If an intern wrote a post, they would receive a byline. The writers would sometimes also give interns credit if they did a particularly good job researching a story. We thought it was important to put the interns' names out on the internet as a blogger or blog contributor, so that they could put it on their resumes.

10. The interns underwent general training, which explained basic tasks and the rules of the site. It differed from the training of regular employees because we took more time with the interns and we emphasized that unlike employees, they are not permitted to post anything to the site without editor review. From there, the training process at io9 differed depending on who trained the interns. I personally trained my interns on how to gather contact information, how to send out public relations blasts, and how to research and report stories. The interns learned how to determine who was a good contact both by trial and error and having the editors explain to them why. The editors also showed interns how to pitch a story. A lot of the training was learning by doing. I used the interns' research in order to write news stories and feature stories, though if we had no interns I would have been able to perform this task myself within my regular workday.

11. My interns were present three days a week, usually Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 9am-4pm.

12. Andrew might have been interning every day, but when an intern is remote and only communicates with the editor via instant message and email, it is difficult to tell exactly how many hours they spent on something. We did not require a minimum number of hours for any intern, including Andrew. If they needed to leave early, it was always fine.

13. I believe having interns to supervise made my job harder. I had to take the time to train all the interns, which took away from the time I had in the day to write. Andrew had difficulty pitching a story that was right for io9, so I gave him less responsibility than other interns.

14. Despite knowing that io9 had a strict policy requiring an editor or supervisor to review intern posts, Andrew posted his stories to the site without my prior review. He posted one particular story that Annalee thought was unsatisfactory work in this manner. That story needed significant attention and editing, which would have happened if Andrew followed protocol and had his supervisor review his writing before posting it to the site.

15. At the end of Andrew's internship, I did not do an evaluation because I felt uncomfortable reviewing him negatively.

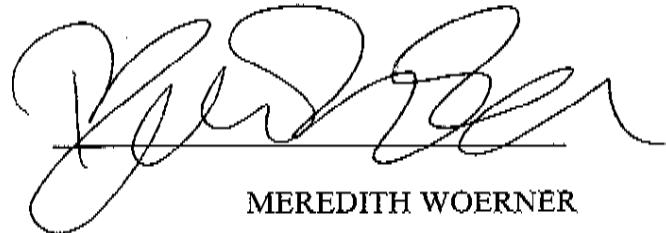
16. Though Andrew did not perform some tasks well, I think he learned a great deal, including the art of researching, writing, and pitching stories to editors, and how to promote work and build online contacts. He also learned to find the industry

contacts necessary to put a story out there. He could have walked away with a richer experience if he had been more patient and took instruction better.

17. I have served as a reference to past interns, but I would not have referred Andrew. In September 2009, Andrew emailed me asking for help networking in the industry since he was job hunting after graduating from college in May 2009. He also expressed interest in writing posts for io9. That email is attached as Exhibit A to this declaration. In his email to me, Andrew described his internship at io9 as “a really interesting experience” though he said he “regret[ted] that [he] might have ended the internship on shaky terms with some of the other editors.” Since he did not do satisfactory work at io9, I would not have been comfortable recommending him to my contacts and did not respond to the email.

I declare under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of New York and the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 10 day of January, 2014 in (New York, NY)



MEREDITH WOERNER

EXHIBIT A



Meredith Woerner <meredith.woerner@gmail.com>

(no subject)

3 messages

Andrew Hudson <andrewdhudson@gmail.com>

Sun, Sep 20, 2009 at 6:23 PM

To: Meredith Woerner <meredith.woerner@gmail.com>, meredith@io9.com

Dear Meredith,

I hope you are well. How are things at io9? I've enjoyed a couple posts you guys have had recently. Megalopolisomancy is a pretty impressive word. If you don't remember me, I interned for io9 last summer, which was a really interesting experience though I regret that I might have ended the internship on shaky terms with some of the other editors. Anyways, I graduated in May and am now in the process of trying to find a job in blogging/journalism/writing/etc., so I thought I would shoot you an email to ask if you knew of any opportunities that might be right for me. Since last year I have gotten a lot of writing and editing experience at my college's student newspaper. I wrote a column that won an award from the Society of Professional Journalists. I've been writing various articles for a St. Louis based magazine start up. I understand that the only way to get a job in journalism right now is through networking. So I would really appreciate it if you could keep an eye out for me. And if io9 has any open space, I'd love to write some posts for you all as well.

Best,

Andrew Hudson

Meredith Woerner <meredith.woerner@gmail.com>

Mon, Jun 24, 2013 at 3:33 PM

To: Annalee Newitz <annalee@io9.com>

[Quoted text hidden]

Meredith Woerner <meredith.woerner@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 8, 2014 at 5:15 PM

To: hdietrick@gawker.com

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Andrew Hudson** <andrewdhudson@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Sep 20, 2009 at 6:23 PM

Subject:

To: Meredith Woerner <meredith.woerner@gmail.com>, meredith@io9.com

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